

The Wise Worker



HIGHLIGHTED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

New Employee Orientation
Houston Public Works Department

City of Houston

Source: www.insidepublicworks.cityofhouston.net

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

HPW Policies comply with City Administrative Procedures, Executive Orders and Mayor's Policies

- ❑ Administrative Procedures, Executive Orders and Mayor's Policies for the City found on City web site. HPW policies found on Employee Portal.
- ❑ Code of Ordinances – Chapter 14 - All things civil service related.

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ATTENDANCE STANDARDS

Standard notice is 7 days unless otherwise specifically determined by Service Line.

- 64-Hr Rule – as described in the Code of Ordinances, Section 14-227. Disciplinary action for sick leave in excess of 64 hours in a benefit year.
- Probationary employees that violate the 64-Hr Rule during their probationary year are indefinitely suspended.
- 3 consecutive days of sick leave requires dr. note.

HPW A.P. 3-7

Source: www.insidepublicworks.cityofhouston.net

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NOTICE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Standard notice is 7 days unless otherwise specifically determined by Service Line.

- Tardies (over 15 min), docks, unscheduled vacation and sick leave are considered violations.
- Eight violations for probationary employees in their probationary year results in termination.
- For eligible employees, FMLA cannot be considered when applying this policy.

HPW A.P. 3-38

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FLOATING HOLIDAY

Employees are granted one 8-hr paid day off as a floating holiday during the calendar year. Must be hired before July 1 to use the same year.

- Floating holidays are to be taken during the calendar year earned (Jan – Dec).
- Requests must be submitted and approved in advance and the floating holiday must be taken on a date mutually agreeable to the employee and supervisor.
- This is a use or lose benefit that will not carry over to the following calendar year if not used.

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WELLNESS DAY

Employees in the Cumulative Sick Leave (CSL) plan are entitled to use up to 8 hours of wellness leave during each benefit year. Wellness leave is to be used for physical examinations and other preventive medical appointments.

- Submit your request to take wellness leave time in advance.
- It's a use or lose benefit. It will not carry over to the next benefit year.
- Submit documentation from your health provider to your time approver.

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EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY

Establishes structures, mechanisms, assignments and expectations for HPW response to emergencies.

- Tier I – all “essential” personnel necessary for continued operation of critical functions pre, intra and post-event periods.
- Tier II – all “essential” personnel without immediate, specific roles – on call.
- Tier III – all remaining “essential” personnel necessary during post-event period – must remain in contact with supervisor/established means of communication for instructions.

HPW A.P. 1-26

Source: www.insidepublicworks.cityofhouston.net

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VACATIONS DURING HURRICANE SEASON

HPW provides critical services daily to the citizens of Houston. During hurricane season (June 1 – November 30):

- ❑ If a vacation request is submitted *prior* to the emergence of a storm in the Gulf of Mexico, it will be honored unless the employee is deemed indispensable to the department's function before, during or after an event.
- ❑ Vacation requests submitted *after* the emergence of a storm will likely be unapproved.
- ❑ When in doubt, ask your supervisor.

HPW A.P. 3-40

Source: www.insidepublicworks.cityofhouston.net

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FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

A City-wide policy administered by the Human Resources department of the City of Houston.

- Protects up to 12 workweeks of paid/unpaid leave for serious health conditions for employee/family during a benefit year.
- TO BE ELIGIBLE** – Employee must have worked for City at least 12 months *and* at least 1,250 hours in the 12-month period preceding the date leave begins.
- TO APPLY** – Contact Human Resource Department/Employee Relations at 832-393-6007.

HPW A.P. 3-1

Source: www.insidepublicworks.cityofhouston.net

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REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES AND APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Applicants/employees are responsible for notifying City of accommodation needs via (1) immediate supervisor; (2) Departmental ADA Liaison; or (3) Citywide ADA Coordinator.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.
- All medical examinations/inquires must be kept apart from general personnel file as confidential medical record.

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SMOKING POLICY

In compliance with City of Houston, Texas, Ordinance No. 2006-1054 as defined in Section 21-236 to 246 of the Code of Ordinances.

- Not permitted in any enclosed area where City personnel are employed.
- Allowed only in outside designated areas at least 25 feet from any entrance or exit, operable windows and ventilation systems of enclosed areas.
- To be done during regular lunch period or one of two authorized 15-minute breaks.

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CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

The City of Houston strictly prohibits employees' use or possession of controlled substances. Possession and use includes having metabolites of a controlled substance in the employees' system resulting in a positive test. Also, arriving at work or working still intoxicated from off-duty use of alcohol is equally prohibited.

- ❑ Random drug testing – must be informed in person. 2 hours to drug test.
- ❑ Drug testing criteria...by witness, erratic or abnormal behavior, loss of property or time, return to work after 30-day absence if in impact position, reasonable suspicion, post accident, follow-up testing.
- ❑ Zero tolerance policy.

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CARRYING OF WEAPONS

In compliance with Sect. 14-184 of the Civil Service Code of Ordinances, all HPW employees are prohibited from carrying dangerous weapons while on City duty or on City property.

- Possession of a weapon without transporting is also considered "carrying" and not allowed.
- Exception is made for those required to carry a weapon in the performance of their official duties.
- Prohibited weapons include any instrument that can inflict serious bodily harm, explosives, and devices that expel projectiles through a barrel.

HPW A.P. 2-04

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USE OF COMPUTERS, EMAIL & INTERNET

City of Houston equipment and electronic systems owned by the City are to be used only to transact city business.

- No personal business on any city issued or owned property.
- HPW reserves the right to monitor use and inspect information contained in them, with or without notice.
- Periodic and random audits conducted.
- Abuse, as outlined in policy, can result in disciplinary action up to and including indefinite suspension.

HPW A.P. 1-6

Source: www.insidepublicworks.cityofhouston.net

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OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

In compliance with Section 14-173 of the Code of Ordinances and Mayor's Policy 108.

- All HPW employees must submit a request for outside employment approval.
- Considerations – whether outside employment will lessen employee's efficiency in any way in working for the City; and potential for conflict of interest.
- Approved requests valid for one year. Must resubmit annually.

HPW A.P. 3-14

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GIFTS POLICY

No City employee shall accept gifts or other benefits, directly or indirectly, from anyone (including relatives) that give the appearance of impropriety or intent to influence City affairs.

- Gift/benefit includes food, goods, services, money, lodging, transportation and/or anything of value or economic gain.
- Exceptions must be approved by Mayor or Mayor designee.
- When in doubt, ask your supervisor.

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MEDIA POLICY

Seeks to inform the public through proactive communication and foster a positive relationship with the media.

- Employees are to notify supervisor of any media request.
- Employees shall refrain from making statements to the media unless authorized by the Director.
- Members of the media who arrive unannounced at an HPW facility or work zone shall be directed to an area of safety outside until approved person is contacted.
- Approved persons to engage media include the Dept. Director, Service Line Directors, and the Public Information Office staff.

HPW A.P. 1-34

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EMPLOYEE CONCERNS RESOLUTION PROGRAM

In accordance with Section 14-55.7 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances.

- Applies to all HPW/City employees regardless of civil service status protection.
- Provides process to address and resolve concerns that are not defined as a grievable issue by City Ordinance (i.e. non-referral for position, classification challenge, etc.).

HPW A.P. 3-36

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